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Ways and Means Human Resources Subcommittee
Improving Programs Designed to Protect At-Risk Youth

Thank you for the opportunity to share our concerns as well as our encouragement to continue providing post-adoption services to children and families who have worked alongside the government to establish a safe and permanent home for our nation's foster children. Embrace Waiting Children Inc. (Embrace) is a non-profit organization founded at Rhea's Mill Baptist Church in the North Texas area. We currently serve families by hosting support groups, respite programs and equipping other churches across the country to reclaim the care of the fatherless.

As well as supporting families throughout the foster care and adoption process, my wife and I are adoptive parents of 4. Our oldest is 18, adopted two years ago, after spending 9 years in foster care and enduring two disrupted adoptive placements. He came to our home with many emotional and behavioral barriers, and we were unable to find adoption competent professionals to assist him in the healing and attachment process. As parents we were able to lean on the relationships we had with other families in our support groups and take advantage of the local churches who cared for us, but for the most part, the post-adopt services that were available to our son needed to be more substantial.

We are aware that you are considering two programs, The Promoting Safe and Stable Families program and the Stephanie Tubbs Jones Child Welfare program, and seeing the limited impact they have had in our sons life, we strongly encourage you to not only maintain these funding streams but to better direct where those funds go. We are in desperate need of adoption competent therapists, psychiatrists and counselors. It is not enough for us to make funds available, we must provide direction for their use and see that needs are being met. Without these funds, one of our most vulnerable populations becomes a future burden instead of a future hope. Thank you for your consideration and work regarding our nation's foster children. I trust your ongoing efforts will be productive as we work with one another to care for these children and families.

Sincerely,

Bruce Kendrick
Director of Outreach
Foster & Adoptive Parent



the church reclaiming the care of orphans and waiting children